

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 1-8 are pending in the application. Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter.

§102 Rejection

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2001-336872.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a refrigerator, and more specifically, to a door handle assembly for a refrigerator. Claim 1 recites, in part, “wherein the second coupling portion is then locked to the first coupling portion by sliding the door handle.”

Oishi teaches a refrigerator door handle which has a synthetic resin handle base which is fixed to the refrigerator door with a screw. While Oishi teaches the claimed structure feature that a handle has a first coupling portion and a bracket-accommodating portion, Oishi fails to teach that the first coupling portion is locked to a second coupling portion by sliding the door handle. Rather, Oishi teaches that the handle and the handle base are locked together by use of a protruding clip and a screw, and the item identified by the Examiner in the Examiner’s annotated figure 4 of Oishi attached to the Office Action as the second coupling portion actually prevents the door handle from sliding. See FIG. 4(c) of Oishi. The element identified by the Examiner as the “sliding guide” is simply a cutout in the door to allow for a screw to be inserted to lock door handle to the handle base, and attach both to the refrigerator door.

Therefore, because Oishi fails to teach or suggest that the second coupling portion is locked to the first coupling portion by sliding the door handle, claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Further, claim 2 is patentable because Oishi fails to teach or suggest the supporting bracket is formed with supporters at opposite ends thereof and/or the door handle is formed with the a sliding guide to support the supporters while sliding.

Claims 3-8 are patentable over the applied art at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted.

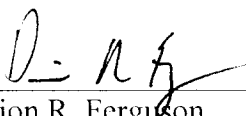
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